COMIC CUTS 1D

"THE FLYING BOTTLE"

An enthralling motor-racing adventure of the three rollicking chums, Duke, Dan, and Darky.

See Page Two.

Comic Cuts 1D

THE KING OF COMICS — EVERY FRIDAY

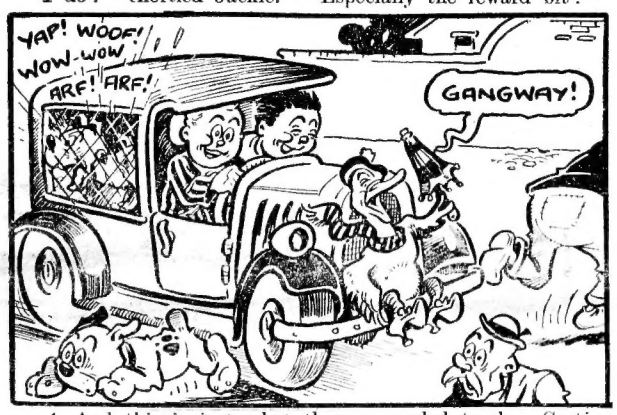
[No. 2,462.] [JULY 24, 1937.]

THE TERRIBLE TWINS ARE DOGGED BY TROUBLE!

1. Our priceless pair were taking a toddle with their feathered friend, Gertie Gosling, when Sammy spotted the S O S on the tree. "See that, brother?" he burbled. "I do!" chortled Jackie. "Especially the reward bit!"

2. They both agreed that the ten bob would be very welcome—if only they could find the mislaid pup. So they toddled on, and suddenly came across the van collecting lost bow-wows. "Look!" quarked Gertie. "Poor Percy!"

3. "You've babbled a beakful!" burbled the twins, after a quick quiz at the collection of canines in the caravan. "That's him all right. We'll skip aboard while the driver's not looking, then scoot round and collect the reward."



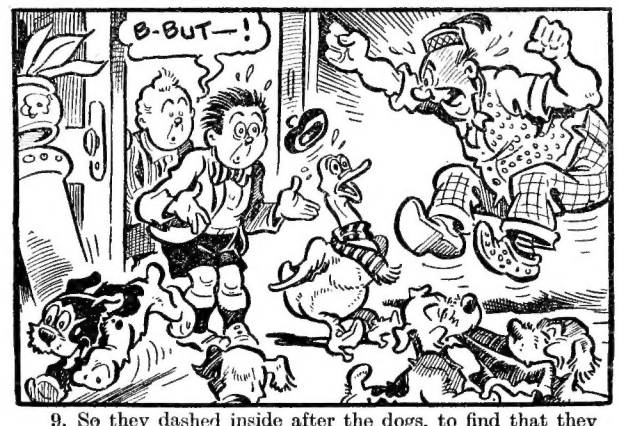
4. And this is just what they proceeded to do. Gertie parked herself on the front bumper as a mascot and yelled to all and sundry and everybody else to clear out of the daylight, or they'd be sorry. "Let it rip!" tootled Sammy.

5. Jackie did that all right. He not only ripped, he fairly tore down the road, and before they knew where they were, they were there. Yes, right outside the posh mansion where Percy resided when he was at home. So good old Gertie—

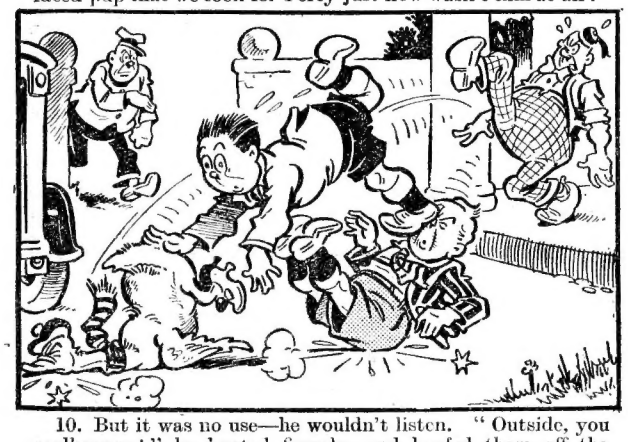
6. Rang the bell to announce the glad tidings that the wanderer had been wafted back again. The door was opened at the same moment that Sammy undid the back of the van. Then there was excitement. Out bounded the bow-wows!

7. And before the twins could dodge out of the way, they were bowled over. "That's done it!" gasped Jackie, as the hounds scuttled joyfully into the house. "And that black faced pup that we took for Percy just now wasn't him at all!"

8. 'Twas a pity they hadn't seen more than his head when they vanished with the van. Anyway, the damage was done now, and a proper ding-dong was going on inside the house. "Come on, we must get 'em all out—quick!" gasped Jackie.

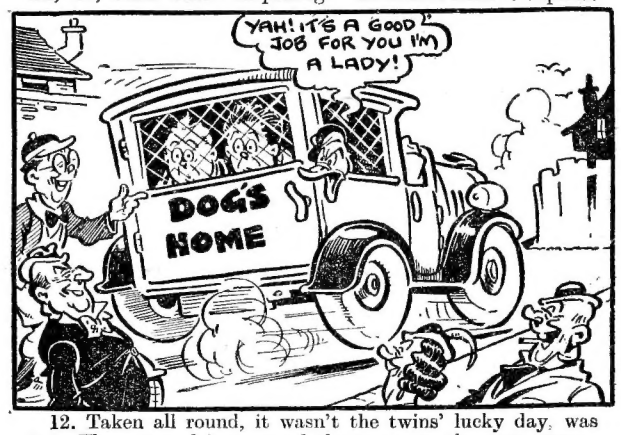


9. So they dashed inside after the dogs, to find that they were having a high old time and doing the place a large piece of no good. The gent who was there was going well up in the air, too, which wasn't surprising. So Jackie tried to explain.



10. But it was no use—he wouldn't listen. "Outside, you scallywags!" he hooted fiercely, and hoofed them off the premises. Down they came in a heap, sharing one large thud between them. Just then along came the driver of the van.

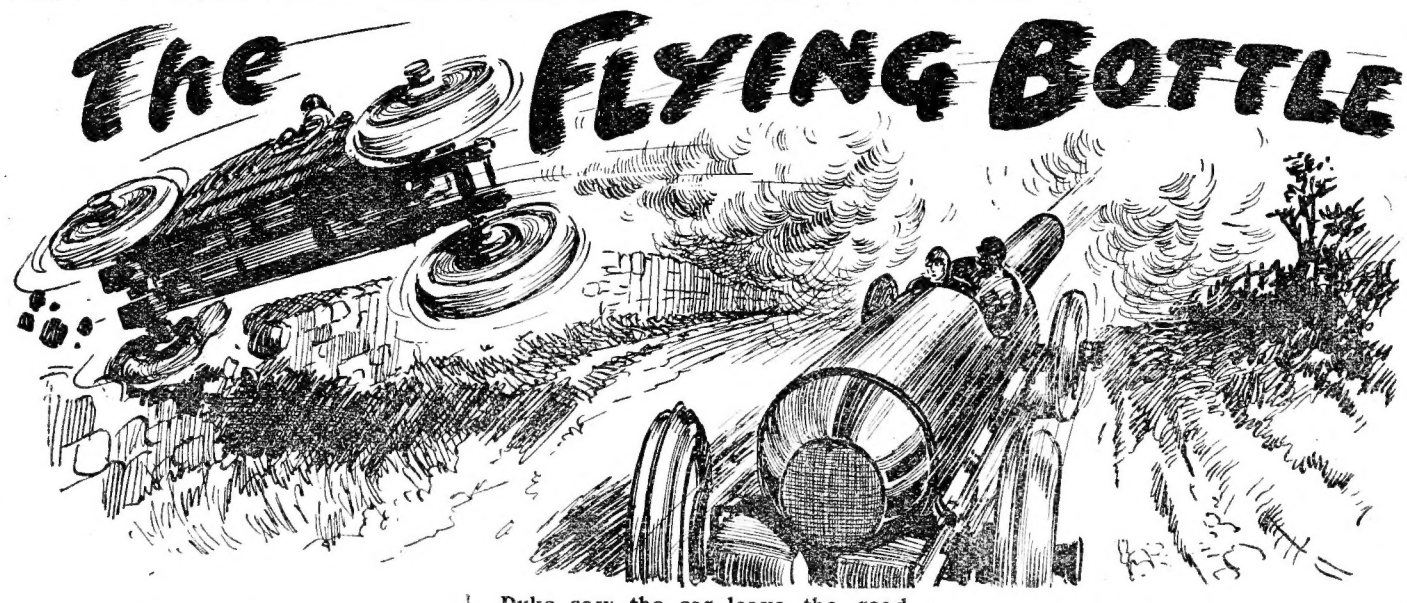
11. So they were booked for more trouble. "Got you at last!" he bawled. "I'll teach you to sneak my runabout. Come on, inside you all go." And he buzzed them into the van, just as the youth brought Percy back and was rewarded.



12. Taken all round, it wasn't the twins' lucky day, was it? They were driven round the town, to the vast amusement of the populace, and finished up at the Dogs' Home, where the driver treated them to large lashings of pant-dusting!

Thrilling and Breathtaking is this Motor-Racing Exploit of Duke, Dan, and Darky.

The Flying Bottle



Duke saw the car leave the road like a rocket and sail over a wall.

A Strange Exchange.

"GREAT SCOTT!" gasped Duke. "Is that a racing-car or an advertisement for some new kind of ginger-beer?"

He pulled up the old car which the three chums had bought in order to see the Grand Prix motor race, and stared at the strange vehicle that stood on the grass verge of the mountain road.

It certainly did look like a giant bottle with wheels attached. Where the "neck" joined the body of it there was the driver's cockpit, and behind it the open mouth of the "bottle" served as a huge exhaust pipe into which little Dan could comfortably have crawled.

By the side of the strange racer sat a man holding his head and staring at his machine with a doleful expression on his pale face.

"What's up, sir?" Dan asked. "Have you had a smash?"

The man seemed not to hear, and Duke saw that he was talking to himself, utterly unaware of their presence beside him.

"Five years wasted," he was murmuring —"five years and a fortune! And nothing but a failure at the end of it all!"

Then, to the chums' astonishment, he got to his feet and went up to the strange car. He lifted his foot and deliberately kicked it—hard!

"Ahem!" coughed Duke awkwardly. "Can we help in any way?"

The man seemed to see them for the first time.

"Help me?" he cried. "Yes—help me to get away from this! I designed it—I built it! I have entered it for to-morrow's race. And it is useless! It has missfired all the way from my garage, a mile down the road. Its steering would drive a corkscrew-maker crazy. It's a failure, I tell you, and I never want to see the beastly thing again!"

Suddenly his eyes fell on the chums' ancient tourer.

"Is that rattle-trap yours?" he cried. "Yes? Then give it to me! In exchange you can have this mountain of useless metal. It's worthless except as old iron, but even that is a fair exchange!"

Duke, Dan, and Darky stared in astonishment as the strange fellow strode towards their car and climbed in. He started the engine and drove rapidly away down the hill.

"De poor gent am gone crackers!" murmured Darky sympathetically.

Just then another racing-car came zooming up the hill and swerved round the corner, for the road was part of to-morrow's race circuit. The driver and his mechanic caught sight of the silent black machine by the roadside and they broke into derisive laughter. It was easy to see that the fame of the "Bottle" and its strange driver had spread to the other competitors in the great race, and that they considered it a grand joke.

But somehow that laughter hurt Duke as though the car was really his. With his face unusually grim, he turned to the machine and opened the bonnet.

Dan, who was nearly as clever a mechanic as Duke himself, leant by his side. In a moment they had forgotten everything but the ingenious mechanism of the car's engine.

"The thing is a perfect marvel!" cried Duke. "I've never seen anything like it—it's entirely new in engine design."

"It's my opinion that it's too efficient," said Dan. "It's over-choking the cylinders. Remember that missfiring he was talking about?"

Darky looked at the two intent backs of his chums and groaned, for he was quite uninterested in machinery. Also, Darky was feeling hungry, and the chums' lunch was gone with their car.

"What about driving it down to de fellow's house and asking for our grub back?" he suggested.

There was only room for Duke and Dan in the cockpit, and Darky had to sit astride the neck of the Bottle behind them. And it was only by clinging on like grim death that he kept his perch.

"Great Scott!" murmured Duke, as they skidded round a corner. "No wonder he went off the road—the steering is terrible!"

"But I believe I can put that right!" cried Dan excitedly. "I was noticing the steering arrangement—it's clever, but it wants a bit of adjusting."

They turned into a drive about a mile down the road and pulled up before a pleasant little bungalow. By the side of the dwelling house was a large garage.

The place seemed deserted until Duke knocked at the door, then a neat countrywoman opened the door and smiled at them.

Duke spoke to her in her own language, and she answered him at some length. Then he turned to his chums with a puzzled look on his face.

"He's gone!" he said. "This is his housekeeper, and she says he drove back in our car, packed a suitcase, and went away saying he wouldn't be back for weeks!"

She seemed to think that there was nothing very strange in her employer's behaviour. He often did unexpected things she said, but that was because he was such a clever man—a genius.

The Race

THAT afternoon Dan and Duke laboured unceasingly over the car, and, as they began to understand its unusual design they grew more and more enthusiastic.

"I'm going to do a trial circuit of the course!" he shouted above the roar of the engine. "It's a hundred miles."

"Let her rip!" grinned Dan, settling himself in the mechanic's seat.

Duke's heart soared with happiness as the big, ugly car sprang away up the road. Gone was that wasteful missfire, the engine pulled with a marvellous smoothness, and its power seemed unlimited.

Still doubtful of the steering, he approached the first hairpin bend gingerly. But Dan had done his work well, and the big car swept round with perfect ease.

After that Duke let her out. They soared up steep mountain roads with the ease of a battle plane. They screamed down narrow tracks, where the surface would have shaken any other car to pieces, with scarcely a jolt. Corners that were death-traps the car took in her stride.

In the market-place of Dillon, the starting-place and finish of the great race on the morrow, they pulled up.

There were a dozen racing-cars standing there in the evening sunshine, and little knots of drivers and mechanics and race officials stood about gossiping. There were many smiles as the grotesque Bottle drew up among the sleek and shining streamlined racers.

But it was a friendly and good-natured crowd that Duke and Dan found themselves amongst.

"You are driving for Monsieur Antillo, gentlemen?" asked an official, who wore the badge of secretary. "Everything is in order. Come, and I will show you your filling-pits and give you your starting time."

In the filling-pit which bore the number of the "Antillo Bottle," as the car was popularly called, they found everything in readiness. There were tanks of special spirit and oil, and a number of spare wheels fitted with new racing tyres. They decided to spend the night there in readiness for the early start on the morrow, and Duke went off to fetch Darky.

But neither Dan nor Duke could sleep much that night. Until very late they were busy working on the car, tuning-up the engine for its tremendous trial.

Even when Duke at last lay down to snatch an hour or two's rest, he could scarcely sleep for excitement.

At last the dawn broke, and soon afterwards the little Alpine town was humming with the noise of engines as the racers were warmed up.

One by one the competitors crept up to the starting-line to wait for the starting-flag to drop. Then, with exhaust note rising to an ear-splitting shriek, they would streak away down the street through the packed crowds of spectaors and soar away up the mountain road on the first of three one-hundred-mile laps.

Starting-time found Duke cool and ready. Dan sat by his side. Darky, who was to remain in the pits for the first lap, had been bitten by the racing craze, and he danced about in his excitement and bawled advice that made everybody laugh.

Then they were off!

The cool mountain wind whipped Duke's cheeks as he slipped into top gear and roared out of the town. The car was going splendidly, and they had made a perfect start. He nerved himself to take the first corner, slithered round it on two wheels, and shrieked onwards.

What the car lost to the others in such refinements as super-streamlining she made up in sheer power. More than any other of the racers, she needed a driver of tremendous nerve.

Sheer luck had found such a man, and the roaring Bottle seemed as if it knew this, and gave of her best.

Relentlessly Duke kept his foot hard down on the accelerator until the last second before braking for a corner. Then, when the road was straight ahead again, he urged her to full speed.

Dan clenched his teeth and gripped the sides of his seat with clenched hands as they hurtled out of a tunnel through the rock and sped along a narrow road cut in the side of the mountain, with a sheer drop of hundreds of feet on one side.

But Duke never thought of slacking speed. Ahead of him he saw another car, and the exhaust flames burst from the mouth of the Bottle as he tore in pursuit.

The car ahead came back to them as though the Bottle was hauling it in on a rope instead of merely overtaking it. And Duke knew at last that what he secretly believed was true—the Bottle was many miles an hour faster than any other car competing in the race. The result would depend on his nerve and skill.

A fearful test came a second later. Neck and neck, the two cars raced for a corner where the road narrowed and there was no room for two abreast. Grimly Duke held on; grimly the other driver urged his car forward. For an agonised second Dan believed that both cars must hurtle into space, and that nothing could save them.

Then the other driver slammed down into low gear and braked. A second later Duke did the same—but he was ahead!

Somehow he got around the awful corner without leaving the road. Then he was hurtling forward again—for there was another car in sight ahead.

After that Dan felt that nothing further could scare him.

The next car was overtaken—and the next. After screaming down a hill that was like a precipice, they roared into Dillon and drew up alongside the pits.

Darky sprang out with a huge drum of petrol. Duke and Dan threw themselves into the job of changing the smoking-hot tyres for new ones.

"You're lying fifth!" yelled the time-keeper.

"Fifth!" murmured Duke, as he started off again. "Not so bad—we started tenth!"

On the second lap three more cars came into sight and were passed during that second gruelling hundred miles.

At the beginning of the last lap it was Darky who took the mechanic's seat beside Duke. The car had run magnificently, and there was little fear that a breakdown would occur now.

"The last but one," murmured Duke, as he spotted a car ahead. After a thrilling race, he overtook it.

The Antillo Bottle was lying second!

Then they saw the leader, and the driver of it knew that he was challenged. At a corner when the Bottle was close behind he left it one second too late before he slowed down.

Duke saw the car leave the road like a rocket, sail over a low wall, and roll over and over in a field beyond. He slammed on the brakes, and the Bottle rocked to a standstill. Before it stopped, Darky had leapt out and raced to the capsized racer.

The mechanic of that machine was the driver's wife, and the frenzied girl was tearing with useless hands at the wreck.

"He's underneath! He'll be burnt to death!" she sobbed.

Darky bent and seized the tail of the racer. His giant muscles cracked as he exerted the last ounce of his tremendous strength. Slowly the wrecked car lifted, and was flung aside.

The driver tottered to his feet, and his wife rushed to him. As Darky raced back to the road the wreckage burst into flames.

The Flying Bottle roared off again, but during the stoppage another car had taken the lead. Duke crept up to its tail and hung there until Dillon was in sight. Down that appalling hill they dropped, and the houses threw back the thunder of their two engines as they raced, dead level, for the finishing line.

Far beyond it they pulled up, and Duke jumped out and ran to the other to congratulate the driver.

"A dead heat, monsieur!" he cried.

"But no!" shouted the other, who was a Frenchman and a generous sportsman. "No, no, no! The race is yours! I saw the fine thing you do—you stop to save the life of a man! I will not share the triumph! You shall not lose because of that magnificent thing you an' your mechanic do!"

So it was decided. The astonishing Antillo Bottle, at which everyone had laughed, was winner of the Grand Prix!

It was late that night before the victorious car and its crew were allowed to leave Dillon for the bungalow on the hill.

There was no sign of Mr. Antillo, but during supper Duke heard a slight noise from the garage. He slipped out into the moonlight. Peering through the open door of the garage, he saw the car's owner leaning over it. He was talking to the child of his brain as though it were indeed a live thing.

"You won!" he murmured. "You won! Yet it was another man who drove you to victory. You are no longer mine, but his! This is just, for he is the better man, and I am nothing but a crazy bungler!"

"That is not so, sir," said Duke quietly. "You are a genius, and now you will be famous, as you deserve!"

The strange man turned and peered at Duke. Then he shook his head stubbornly.

"The car is yours," he said—"I gave it to you! Would I go back on my word?"

"That question will keep till to-morrow, sir," said Duke. "Meanwhile, we both need sleep."

He led the man into his own house and made him go to bed.

After an hour or so, when he was sure Mr. Antillo was asleep, he crept silently from the house. By the ancient car in which the car designer had returned he met Dan and Darky. Silently they pushed it out of the drive and down the road, out of earshot of the house.

Then they started the engine and drove off.

"He does not even know our names," murmured Duke. "He will never trace us!"

Then he slept, and Dan drove on through the night.

(Another stirring adventure of Duke, Dan, and Darky next week.)

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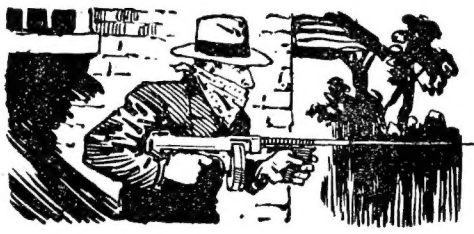


The G-KID

G-Man Vic Britten and Jackie Ryan, known as the G-Kid, are hot on the trail of Red Campoli, America's Public Enemy No. 1, who has escaped to England. At the house of Sir Bernard Guy, he is captured by Vic, but escapes, taking with him Sir Bernard's daughter Judy. Jackie manages to get on the back of the car.

Turning tne Tables !

HE was trapped—trapped like a rat!

Cramped up in the luggage container at the back, Jackie Ryan, the G-kid, went numb with horror as the doomed car rattled and bumped up the steep moorland lane towards the old quarry, with Spike Venner at the wheel.

The irony of it!

Red Campoli couldn't have chosen a more certain way of getting rid of him if he'd tried—yet he didn't even know the boy was there! Spike didn't know it either. Jackie was their only source of danger, and they were getting rid of him without being aware of it.

Spike's orders were to send the stolen vehicle crashing over the edge of the lonely quarry, where it would never be found for months, if at all.

"I guess that's the place, up there," he muttered to himself, seeing a line of broken railings against the sky, breaking the wide sweep of the moor. "O.K., this is where I get ready to jump!"

He turned the car off the lane and sent her bumping crazily over the rough heather, steering with one hand while his other fumbled at the handle of the door to open it ready for his leap to safety.

At the same moment Jackie jerked his frozen limbs into action.

It was now or never, if he wanted to take a chance of escape!

He flung the lid of the container open and scrambled over the top of it somehow. The car breasted the rise and started to gather speed on the slight downward slope towards the lip of the quarry.

Jackie had a lightning vision of himself spread-eagled on the moor with broken limb at Spike's mercy, but the risk had got to be taken. He fell out, rather than jumped. With the wind and the roar of the engine in his ears he landed in the heather on his face, unhurt except for a few bruises and a scratch or two.

He turned his head and saw Spike jump clear, and a couple of seconds later the driverless car went hurtling over the edge of the drop. For a few seconds the roar of the falling engine echoed back to them, and then—crash!

Spike sprinted to the edge as it went over and was in time to see it crash. White and shaken at his narrow escape, Jackie didn't wait for him to turn round again, but scrambled to cover behind a boulder and lay there for a moment or two, fighting hard to overcome his dizziness and plan what to do next.

If he hadn't been able to get out in time—if he had gone over with it! He shuddered. Gosh, it didn't bear thinking about!

But there was no need to think about it, for by a miracle he was safe. Pulling himself together, he peered cautiously round the boulder and saw Spike coming back from the quarry edge, his flat, ugly face creased in a wide smile.

"Done that job real swell," the G-kid heard him mutter to himself with satisfaction. "Reckon the boss'll hand me a bouquet for it—yes, sir!"

"Oh, will he?" muttered the G-kid, his eyes suddenly gleaming as an idea came into his tousled head.

Totally unconscious of anyone else's presence the crook strode past the boulder on his way back to the lane, and that was Jackie's chance. As Spike's legs came into view, he made a sudden dive at them and gripped them round the ankles, giving them an upward jerk at the same time.

Spike uttered a wild yell as he felt his feet jerking from under him, but he was taken so utterly by surprise that he couldn't do a thing to save himself.

Thud! He landed on his face in the heather, striking his head on the side of the boulder as he fell.

"Got you!" panted Jackie joyfully, launching himself on top of him. "Didn't think you'd got me for a passenger, did you? But—aw, he's not listenin'!" he finished disgustedly, relaxing his clenched fist. "He's knocked out! Never mind, that'll sure save me a heap o' trouble!"

Spike was indeed stunned.

As quick as thought Jackie pulled off the crook's jacket and started to tear strips out of it ruthlessly, hacking the material where necessary with Spike's own pocket-knife. This made rough and ready means to bind him with, and in a very short time he was trussed up like a fowl.

"An' here's the stuffin' for you!" Jackie chortled, pushing Spike's handkerchief into his mouth for a gag and securing it with his tie. "You're properly cooked now, old bird!"

Spike was already showing signs of coming to, and when he realised where he was and what had happened to him, you can imagine his feelings!

He glared at Jackie speechlessly as the G-kid rose to his feet and pulled him further round the boulder, out of sight from the lane, grinning down at him cheerfully as he did so.

"Never expected me to blow along, did you, buddy?" remarked Jackie chirpily. "I guess I won't tell you how I got here—I'll leave you to figure it out for yourself while I pay a call on your boss. Toodle-oo!"

Very pleased with himself, he made a bee-line for the lane, but when he was in sight of the lonely cottage where Campoli was holding Judy prisoner, he came to a halt, and his freckled face stopped smiling.

The G-Kid jerked Spike's feet from under him.

His troubles had only just begun, and he knew it.

Campoli and the Spider had got to be dealt with before he could release Judy and take her home again to Trewan Manor in Cornwall. Crumbs, if he could only capture them single-handed, what glory for him! But he didn't dare to risk it.

If he failed, there was nobody to send word of their whereabouts to G-man Vic Britten, his boss. No, the first thing he must do was to pass on the vital information to Vic by phone, so that reinforcements would be on the way.

But even that was easier said than done, because there aren't many phones in the middle of Dartmoor!

How was he to get word through to Vic without loss of time? He might have to tramp miles and miles before coming to any other sign of civilisation, if he left this spot.

His eyes sparkled suddenly as he saw the cottage door open, and Campoli and the Spider come out. In a flash he dived to cover behind the low wall that bounded the lane, watching to see what they were going to do.

Campoli was scowling, and the Spider looked uneasily up the lane towards the quarry and shook his head in response to something that his boss had said. Jackie couldn't hear what they were saying at that distance, of course, but it was easy to see that they were worried over Spike's non-return, and were wondering what had happened to him.

Sure enough, they came straight up the lane towards him, and passed the spot where he was crouching without any suspicion of his presence so near them.

"Do you reckon it's likely he didn't jump clear in time, an' went over with the car, boss?" the Spider was venturing, as they passed.

Campoli smiled thinly.

"If he did, I'm one fool the less," he replied, in a tone that made the Spider writhe. "I've got no use for bunglers!"

They strode on up the lane, and directly they were out of sight Jackie sprang to his feet, his eyes blazing excitedly.

As far as he knew there was nobody in the cottage now but Judy and one old woman who was there to look after her.

Well, why shouldn't he phone to Vic from the cottage itself, before the Americans came back? The sheer audacity of the scheme appealed to him irresistibly, and, without stopping to think twice, he broke into a run.

At the Cottage.

THE garden looked empty, and he was almost at the door before he became aware that somebody was bending over the row of cabbages at the side.

It was the old woman who owned the cottage, a bent, withered, sour-looking old dame, who gave Jackie the creeps at first sight.

He drew back hastily behind a laurel bush, fully expecting her to turn round and see him, because it seemed to him that she couldn't have helped hearing the crunch of his shoes on the gravel path.

But she didn't turn round or give any sign that she had heard him, and after a minute it dawned on him that she was very deaf.

"Gee whiz!" he murmured with satisfaction. "It's goin' to be as easy as slippin' on a pound o' butter! Now's my chance to nip inside, while she's busy makin' love to the cabbages!"

He stole softly round the cottage to the kitchen door, which was open, and found himself looking into an untidy little kitchen which was unoccupied. He tiptoed across it and cautiously opened the door into the sitting-room beyond. It was also empty, and his eyes shone at the sight of a telephone instrument on a side table.

This cottage must be a specially prepared lair of Campoli's, all ready for his new career of crime in England, the G-kid decided.

As this thought passed through his mind, he was already making for the phone, and he lifted the receiver and asked to be put through to Trewan Manor at once, keeping a wary eye on the door as he did so.

It seemed an age before Vic's well-known voice came through, tense with worry.

The last few hours had been a nightmare to the young G-man.

Not only had he Judy's disappearance and Campoli's escape to rack him with anxiety, but Jackie's disappearance as well.

He had seen the G-kid jump for the back of the crooks' car and hang on like grim death as it roared away from the Manor, and he didn't know what had happened since. Jackie might have fallen off and injured himself—he might have clung on and been discovered when Campoli reached his journey's end—anything, anything might have happened to him!

And Vic was helpless.

He didn't dare call in the police, as Campoli very well knew, because of fear of what would happen to Judy if he did. He didn't even dare to leave the Manor to try to get on their track himself, in case Jackie tried to get in touch with him and found him gone.

All he could do was to wait—wait—wait, till word come from either Jackie or Campoli himself.

When the phone bell rang, he had sprung across the room like a tiger, itching to come to grips with something at last.

"Yes, who is that speaking?" he asked tensely, and he could have danced with relief when he heard Jackie's cheerful voice.

In a very few minutes he was in possession of all that the G-kid had to tell, and his own voice was warm with approval as he said "Good kid!"

"But you're not to do anything else till I arrive," he added crisply. "You've faced enough dangers on your own, and I'll never forgive myself if Campoli gets you now after all! Don't attempt to find Judy—just clear out of the cottage while you can, and go into hiding until I come—understand?"

"Sure, I understand, boss," answered Jackie demurely. "So long!"

He hung up—and it was a pity Vic couldn't see the gleam in his eye as he did so! Jackie understood all right, but whether he was going to act on it was another matter!

Why, this was the best chance of helping Judy to escape that could ever happen!

There was only one other room downstairs, and it didn't take the G-kid long to find out that it, too, was empty. She must be imprisoned upstairs, then.

He crept up as quietly as possible, in case any other of Campoli's gang was about. But the arch-crook's plans had been all sent astray by the events of the night. He had never intended to call at this cottage at all, originally, but to head straight for London, where the rest of his gang were awaiting him; so there was nobody in the cottage at the present moment but Jackie himself—and Judy.

It was easy to see which room she was in, because only one door was shut, and the key was in the lock outside.

Jackie turned it softly and slipped inside.

Judy swung round with a startled gasp, her pretty face white with fear, for she thought it was one of her captors who was entering.

When she saw who it really was—well, it was all she could do to stop herself from crying out with surprise and relief!

"How—how did you get here?" she gasped. "I—I'm not dreaming, am I?"

"Nope!" responded Jackie with a grin. "I guess it's yours truly all right, miss, but I'll tell you about gettin' here later, if you don't mind. What we've got to do now is to nip downstairs an' out o' the cottage before anyone comes back, see? It's empty at present."

"Oh, lovely!" cried the girl. "Then I needn't go on with this, need I? I was trying to make a rope to let down out of the window!"

She had torn her sheets into strips and had been busy knotting them into a rope when he had entered. Now she flung the half-finished "rope" down on to the bed and hurried to accompany him out of the room.

But luck, which had been with him so far, played a nasty trick at the last moment. A sudden gust of wind blowing through the open window caused the door to swing to. Jackie made a wild dive to stop it banging, but he was too late. It shut with a click, and though he wrenched furiously at the handle he couldn't open it again.

"Well, for cryin' out loud!" he said disgustedly. "It's a spring lock—an' the key's still on the outside. Reckon we'll have to use your rope after all!"

"We can't!" interrupted Judy with an anguished cry, running to the window. "Campoli's coming back—he'll see us! Look, he's coming in at the gate now."

Keeping well back behind the ragged curtain so as to be unseen himself, the G-kid peered out of the window.

Campoli was there, and the Spider—and Spike Venner, too!

They had found him and released him and brought him back, and Campoli's face wore

Judy swung round with a startled gasp.

the look of an angry tiger as he barked out orders to his men to search the cottage.

They knew Jackie was here—they had got Spike's story, for sure. It would be a matter of minutes only before they found him, and then——

Jackie knew just how much mercy he could expect at the hands of America's Number One Killer!

(Now what's going to happen? More thrills and surprises in next week's instalment of this great detective drama.)

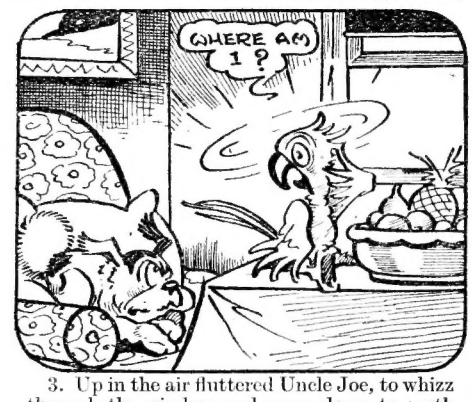
24-7-37

THE MERRY MASCOTS

COMIC KING OF

1. "Oh dear!" piped Uncle Joe. "I feel all hollow under the pullover, I do, really! I'm so hungry I could chew a doormat. What wouldn't I give for something solid." Now, William—

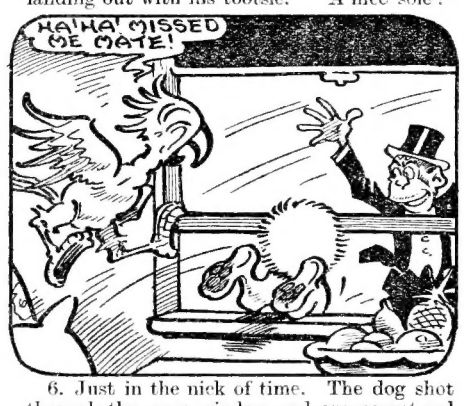
2. Trotting behind, heard Uncle's tale of woe, and promptly came to the rescue of his old pal. "Here you are, Beak!" he chattered, landing out with his tootsie. "A nice sole!"



3. Up in the air fluttered Uncle Joe, to whizz through the window and come down to earth on the table—right beside a nice big bowl of fruit. But a fierce-looking hound was there.

4. And when he saw the visitor, he wasn't at all pleased. "Don't worry, mate," piped Uncle, fluttering in every feather. "It's only little me. I won't do you any harm!"

5. But, as has already been remarked, the hound was not at home to visitors. He did a leap out of the chair, and Uncle would have got it in the neck if he hadn't fluttered up.



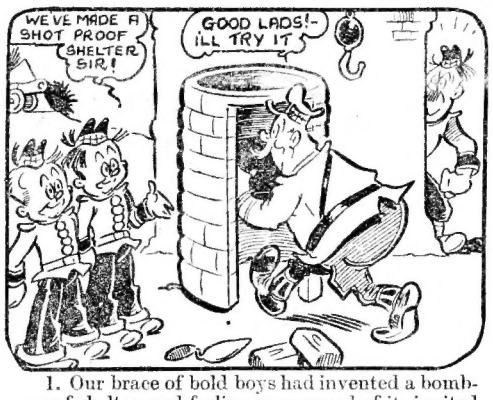
6. Just in the nick of time. The dog shot through the open window and our parrot pal promptly slammed it down, 'cos he was feeling a bit of a draught. "Ha, ha!" he cackled.

7. And d'you know the reason for this outburst of merriment? Why, not only was that pup outside, but old William as well. He soon found himself mixed up in a spot of bother.

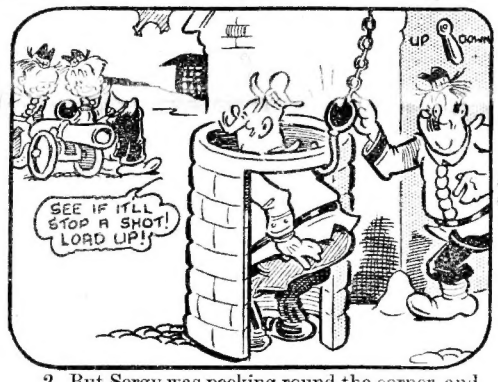
8. For the pup pursued him at top speed, and Billyum wished he hadn't been quite so free with his boot. Anyway, Uncle Joe was left to get on with it. And he got on with it!

PLUM AND DUFF

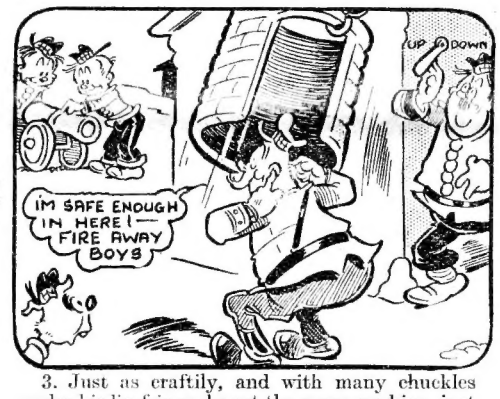
THE BOYS OF THE BOLD BRIGADE



1. Our brace of bold boys had invented a bomb-proof shelter, and feeling very proud of it, invited the colonel to come and try it. "I will an' all, lads!" he gurgled, and parked himself inside.



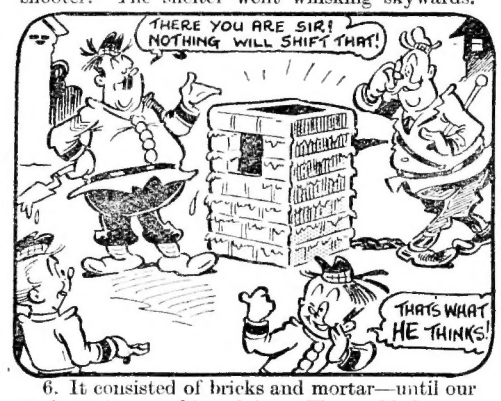
2. But Sergy was peeking round the corner, and he was very jealous at the idea of P. and D. getting away with it. So he craftily pulled down the crane hook and tucked it under the doings. Then—



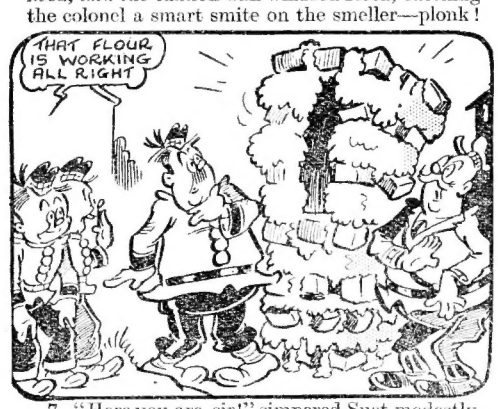
3. Just as craftily, and with many chuckles under his lip-fringe, he set the crane working, just as our lads were about to ginger up the old pea-shooter. The shelter went whisking skywards.

4. In the excitement, neither the lads nor old Bogey noticed this. Consequently, the gun was fired, and the cannon-ball whizzed forth, catching the colonel a smart smite on the smeller—plonk!

5. "That's all I want of that lark!" he honked, pushing off. "I shan't be able to tell eau-de-Cologne from winkles for a week." Then Sergy jumped in and started to erect his own shelter.

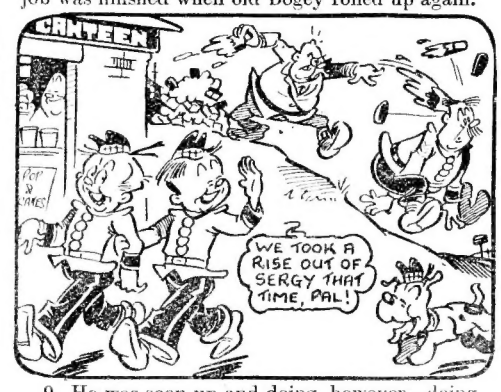


6. It consisted of bricks and mortar—until our perky privates chipped in. They added some self-raising flour, just to liven things up. The job was finished when old Bogey rolled up again.



7. "Here you are, sir!" simpered Suet modestly. "That's the real article, that is, sir. Nothing will shift it, take it from me." But even as he spake the words, the self-raising flour got going.

8. It rose and it rose, till it couldn't rise any more. Then the whole caboodle sort of came over giddy and fell to bits, an assortment of which copped the colonel on the crumpet and floored him.



9. He was soon up and doing, however—doing things to Sergy that he didn't like. Buzzing the remains of his sure-thing shelter at him, to keep himself fit. So P. and D. retired to the canteen.

MI WERE

Sele

"GINGER!" SAID THE JOAK EDITOR "I'M TAKING MY LITTLE BOY OWT PRESENTLY BUT UNTIL I'VE KLEARED UP MY WERK, I WANT YOU TO KEEP ARCHIBALD OUT OF MISCHIEF!"
HE WAS VERY QUIET & I WAS ABLE TO GIVE MY WHOLE ATTENSHUN TO SELEKTING NEXT SATURDAY'S CRIKIT TEAM
PRESENTLY THE 'PHON
AFTER A STRUGGLE I GOT IT OFF! I THORT YOUNG ARCHIBALD MIGHT KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT IT, BUT HE WAS STILL READING
I HAD TO GO INTO MR CL ROOM THEN WHEN I KA BACK, ARCH SEEMED TO HAVING JU A QUIET ST ROWND
I WENT OVER TO MY DESK AND SAT DOWN AND AS I DID SO I FELT THE POINT OF A DRORING PIN
YOW !!
MY YELLING BRORT ARCHIE'S PAPA IN! "HA HA HA!" HE GURGLED "ONE OF ARCHIE'S LITTLE JOKES EH? WE'LL SOON PUT YOU RIGHT"

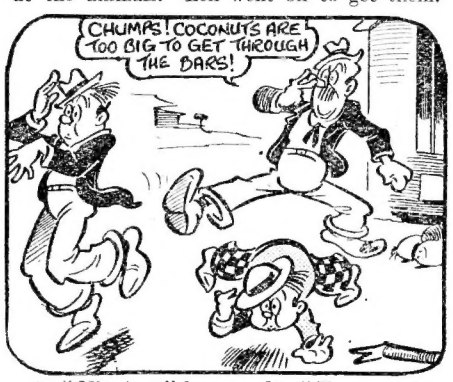
BIG BEN AND LITTLE LEN

1. Pa was in an extra-generous mood. Not only did he treat Ben and Len to the Zoo, but he coughed up a bob for some nuts to buzz at the animals. Len went off to get them.

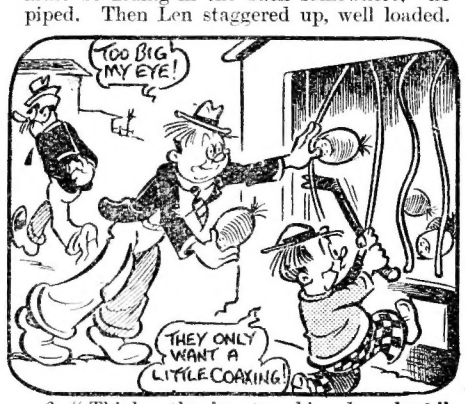
2. Ben strolled along to the cheetah cage, to see plenty of cage but no cheetah. "He must be hiding in the back somewhere," he piped. Then Len staggered up, well loaded.

3. "Ah! I'll soon make that cheetah show himself!" burbled Ben, seeing the coconuts his young brother had brought. So he got busy buzzing them at the bars of the cage.

4. "What's going on here?" parped Pa, as he heard the din. "What mischief are they up to now?" And he came rushing up, in time to stop the coconuts which all rebounded.



5. "Nitwits!" he roared. "Fancy trying to get coconuts between those bars. You ought to know better." And with those few words, he hoofed the lads heartily out of it.



6. "Thinks they're too big, does he?" snorted Ben. "We'll soon show him if we can get those nuts into the cage or not." So Len forced the bars apart with a crowbar.

7. And then Ben was able to push the nuts into the cage, after which they proudly pranced up to Pa to tell him what they'd done. But by this time the cheetah had been aroused, and—

8. He lost no time in coming forth for a stroll round. "Wow!" screamed the old parent in dire alarm. And while the cheetah chased him, the lads had a jaunt on Jumbo.

DUSKY AND DANDO

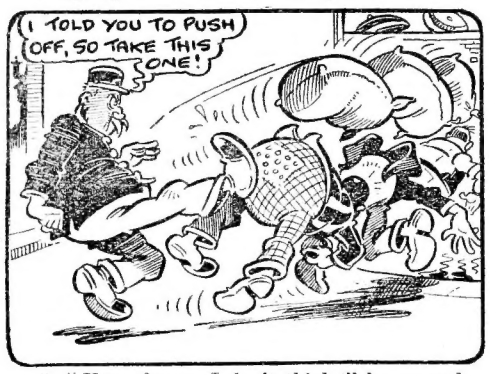
... THE LIGHT-HEARTED DARKIES ...

1. Our chocolate cherubs had strolled into the swimming pool, and the attendant requested them to stroll out again. He wasn't polite about it, either. "Get out and stay out!" he howled.

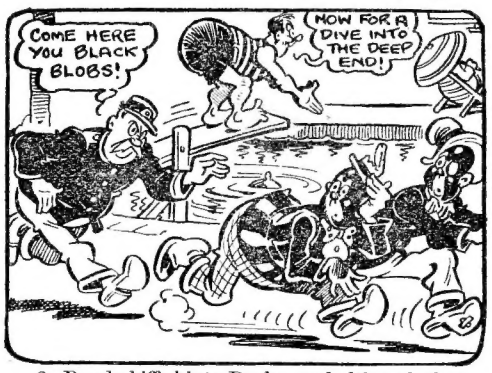
2. With which, he slammed them through the door and they came down with a thud. "He doesn't seem to want us!" sighed Dando. "But we're going in all the same!" Dusky informed him.

3. For he'd spotted the sacks of cement being unloaded just outside. So he offered to give the chap a hand, and the offer was gladly accepted. "Come on, bo'!" gurgled Dusky. "Get going!"

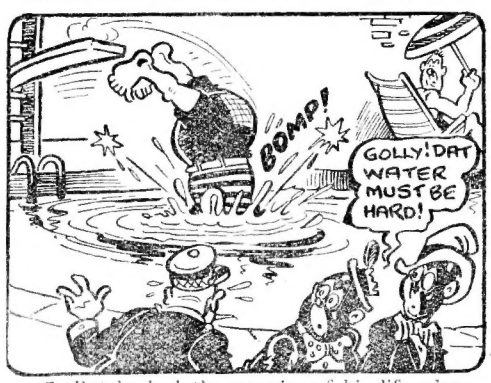
4. In a shake of braces—beg pardon, a brace of shakes—our hard-baked heroes were staggering into the swimming-pool folded double under a sack of cement each. But the attendant saw them.



5. "Very clever—I don't think!" he yapped. "Trying to get past me, hey? I'll just join in the queue and help them on their way!" And this he did, catching Dando a ponk on the pants.



6. Dando biffed into Dusky, and although they managed to save themselves from having a dip, the sacks of cement weren't so lucky. They jazzed into the juice, just as a diver decided to do ditto.

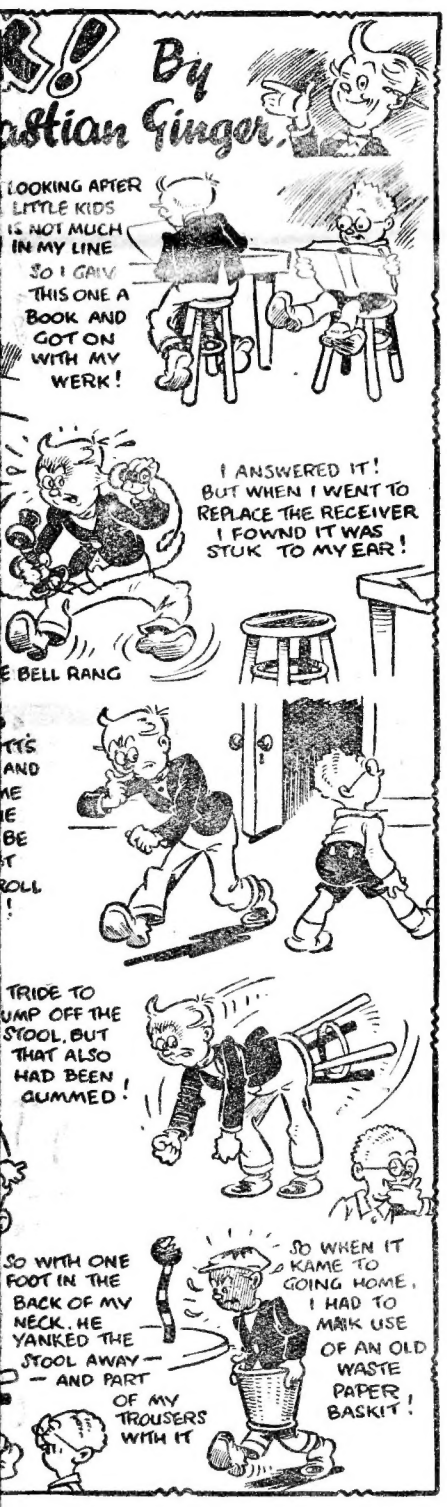


7. But he had the surprise of his life when, instead of going well under with a soothing sonk, he came to a sudden stop with a biff. For he'd dived in just where the sacks of cement had fallen.

8. Then came the really funny part, or so our chums thought. Having gone in off the deep end and hurt himself, the bather went in off the deep end again—with the idea of hurting the attendant.

9. So while the two of them were sort of sorting things out, D. and D. adopted the swimming pool as their very own, and very kindly invited all the local readers to join in the free treat. 24-7-37

...R! By ...astian Ginger.


LOOKING AFTER LITTLE KIDS IS NOT MUCH IN MY LINE
SO I GAIV THIS ONE A BOOK AND GOT ON WITH MY WERK!
I ANSWERED IT! BUT WHEN I WENT TO REPLACE THE RECEIVER I FOWND IT WAS STUK TO MY EAR!
E BELL RANG
TT'S AND ME E BE T ROLL !
TRIDE TO UMP OFF THE STOOL. BUT THAT ALSO HAD BEEN GUMMED!
SO WITH ONE FOOT IN THE BACK OF MY NECK, HE YANKED THE STOOL AWAY— — AND PART OF MY TROUSERS WITH IT
SO WHEN IT KAME TO GOING HOME, I HAD TO MAIK USE OF AN OLD WASTE PAPER BASKIT!

LANCASHIRE LAD

OUR GREAT HUMAN STORY-DRAMA.

Bob Brierly, a young Lancashire lad, is duped by two unscrupulous rogues, Jem Dalton, known as the Tiger, and Melter Moss, a fence, and sent to prison for five years. Upon his release he has a loyal friend in May Edwards. After many ups and downs, May wins a large sum of money in a competition. She buys a roadside cafe, at which Bob helps her. They discover, however, that their landlord is Melter Moss. One night Bob finds a burglar in the office.

The Tiger Wins Again.

BOB BRIERLY'S eyes narrowed at the sight that met his gaze through the crack of the partly open door. An unknown intruder was in the back room of May Edwards' roadside cafe, and his purpose was obvious from the array of housebreaking implements spread out on the table before him.

"Got enough tools to rob a bank, too!" Bob thought. "I don't know what he thinks to find in a small place like this, but I know what he's going to get!"

With a quick movement, he thrust the door wide open and stepped boldly into the room.

"What are you doing here?" he demanded sternly. "And who——"

But he said no more—speech dried up in his throat. The intruder had swung round with an audible gasp, and the Lancashire lad saw his face.

Jem Dalton—the Tiger!

For a split second Bob's brain seemed to go numb with the shock. So May's strange premonition had come true, after all—and so soon! The arch-crook, ruthless enemy of them both, was here!

"You!" breathed Bob, as his brain cleared.

Jem Dalton drew in his breath in a low hiss, and his face broke into a sardonic smile as he recognised the Lancashire lad.

"So it is you—my old friend ex-convict Bob Brierly!" he drawled coolly. "A surprise indeed—if not exactly a pleasure."

"You didn't expect to see me here!" asserted Bob.

"Frankly, I did not," admitted Jem Dalton suavely. "Not that it makes the slightest difference, of course. If you have any idea at the back of your mind of interfering with me in any way, forget it! You should know by now that mixing in my affairs is a highly dangerous pastime!"

His cool, openly contemptuous manner stung Bob and made him grit his teeth. But it also made him all the more resolute and determined in what he intended to do now.

"You're not going to get away this time, Jem Dalton!" he cried in a ringing tone.

The sneering smile went from Dalton's face like the whisking away of a mask. His dark eyes gleamed, and in a flash his expression resembled that of the merciless wild beast of the jungle which had given him his nickname.

"Listen to me, you fool!" he snarled. "I have business to do—and I don't intend to let you interfere with it. Now get out!"

Bob felt his temper rising at the cool audacity of the man, but he knew he must keep a cool head.

"When I go out you're going with me!" he gritted.

Swift as lightning, Dalton whipped up the life-preserver on the table and hurled it at the Lancashire lad's head. Bob saw it coming, however, and quickly ducked, and it missed him by less than an inch.

Next instant Bob grasped the table and jerked it violently forward so that the edge of it caught Dalton across the middle and sent him reeling backwards, doubled up and gasping.

Bob was over the table and on him in full fury. He knew from experience the kind of man he had to deal with—one who would show him no mercy. Bob intended to show him none, either.

He rained a shower of blows on Dalton's face with both fists, and sent him crashing to the floor. Then he pounced on the rogue and pinned him down.

But the Tiger was not finished yet. With another spluttering snarl and an unexpected wriggling movement he shot Bob off him and rolled clear.

In a flash he was on his opponent and the tables were turned. Bob was pummelled and kicked, for the Tiger was never scrupulous in overcoming an adversary.

Still Bob did his utmost and for some moments the desperate combat continued. The room resounded to the crashing of blows, the pants and gasps of the two men, as each fought and struggled with grim ferocity to master the other. No quarter was given—and none was asked.

The end came suddenly and disastrously for Bob. Jem Dalton caught sight of the life-preserver on the floor. With a desperate effort he struggled to reach it. A violent

The edge of the table caught Dalton across the middle and doubled him up.

heave flung Bob sideways. Dalton stretched out an arm and, seizing the life-preserver, brought it down with full force on the Lancashire lad's head.

With a low moan Bob went limp, all resistance gone out of him. The Tiger raised the weapon as though to use it a second time, but paused while it was in the air. He could see there was no need to repeat that blow. Bob was knocked right out.

Breathing heavily and noisily, Dalton got to his feet and hastily wiped the blood from his battered face. His clothes were torn and dusty and one eye was rapidly going into a state of mourning.

"If I had any sense I'd finish you off altogether!" he snarled, glaring down at his senseless victim.

He listened intently for some moments to make quite sure that they had not attracted attention. But all was strangely silent now, not even a passing car could be heard.

Then, having cleaned himself up, the Tiger gathered the burgling implements together, and turned to give the prostrate Bob a vicious kick.

"So you thought I'd come here to rob this miserable hole?" he muttered. "But I've bigger fish to fry!"

He lit a cigarette and tossed the lighted match away in a corner, not even glancing to see where it fell. It landed, still burning brightly, on a pile of dusters, which, in a few moments, flared up.

But the Tiger knew nothing of that. He had let himself out of the silent cafe and, getting into his waiting car, drove swiftly away into the night.

Disaster!

WITH a low moan, Bob opened his eyes and stared weakly and unseeingly around. He ached from head to foot, and it was a few moments before recollection fully returned of what had happened.

Then, as it all came back to him, and he realised that the Tiger had beaten him again, he roused himself with an effort and struggled to his feet. His eyes opened wide as he did so, for he realised that the room was full of thick smoke, through which he could make out leaping tongues of flame in a corner of the room.

"Fire!" he gasped thickly. "The place is on fire!"

The discovery cleared his brain as if by magic, and, realising his peril, he groped his way, gasping and choking, to the door. Reaching it, he flung it open and staggered out, gulping greedily at the fresh air.

He filled his lungs and then wondered what best to do. He was alone, and some distance from the town. The telephone had not yet been put on.

Rushing out into the open, he looked eagerly along the arterial road in both directions. But there was no sign of a car or of any living soul, and more than ever he realised how serious was the situation.

"Must tackle the job myself—hope for the best," he muttered. "Can't afford to let the fire get a hold while I run into town!"

Finding a bucket, he filled it with water, and dashed into the blazing room, holding his breath to prevent being choked, as he hurled the contents of the pail in the far corner where the fire seemed at its worst.

There came a loud hiss, and thicker clouds of smoke arose. But that was all, and, with increased anxiety, he rushed to fill the pail again.

It was his only means of fighting the fire, and, though it was better than nothing at all, it seemed pitifully futile. With a damp handkerchief across his mouth and nostrils, he worked feverishly, rushing to and fro with more water, hoping all the while that assistance would soon be forthcoming.

If only someone should pass. But nobody did, and Bob dared not cease his efforts to go and look for help.

He thought of the Tiger, and wondered if he had had a hand in starting the fire. He thought, too, of May, and it brought a choking sob to his throat. What a shock it would be for her when she heard the news! Her whole livelihood and future prospects depended on this cafe in which she had invested every penny. If anything should happen to it——

The thought spurred Bob on to even more frantic efforts. He ran to and fro almost mechanically, attacking the flames.

He realised to his horror that the fire was spreading rapidly, in spite of his desperate efforts. It seemed useless for him to try to get it under alone, and, dropping the pail at last, he set about the task of salvaging what he could before the fire destroyed it.

Tables and chairs were carried out and deposited on the little lawn at the side of the cafe, where teas and other meals were served under big, gaudily coloured umbrellas when the weather was fine enough.

His efforts were exhausting, yet he did not realise that in the excitement and deep concern he felt. And then he uttered a cry of joy as he saw the headlights of a car.

There was no need to hail it, the driver saw what was amiss and pulled up. In rapid, eager tones, Bob panted an appeal to fetch help, and the driver, who was alone in the car, sped on to the town to warn the fire brigade.

With a sob of relief Bob resumed his salvaging efforts. There was still work for a dozen helpers if only they had been available, for the few things he had managed to bring out so far represented only a small proportion of May's effects.

But as he was about to re-enter the place, there came a fierce roar, and a huge sheet of flame shot up, illuminating the sky with a ruddy glow. The whole place was alight!

Bob staggered back and stared aghast at the sight. He realised now that the whole place was doomed.

With fists clenched impotently, grinding his teeth at his own helplessness, and the savageness of Fate, Bob stood there a solitary spectator of the awe-inspiring spectacle. The whole place was going up in flames, and with it all May's fond hopes for the future—and Bob's, too. From the direction of the town at long last came the clang-clang of the fire-engine's bell, and Bob turned, to see it rushing to the scene.

The firemen lost no time in running out their hoses, and playing on the fire. The news spread, the lurid reflection in the night-bound sky had been seen, and numbers of people came out to view the spectacle.

Daylight came before the fire was at last got under, and by that time all that remained of May's roadside cafe was the bare shell of the building, with a few chairs and tables, salvaged by Bob, huddled pitifully together on the water-drenched lawn at the side.

Poor May! How was he going to break the dread news to her?

But suddenly he saw her approaching. She was running along the road.

"Oh, Bob—Bob!" she gasped, breaking through the crowd and grasping both his hands. "How—how did it happen? I've only just been told, and I came rushing here at once, anxious to know that you were safe."

"I'm all right, May," he replied in a dull, lifeless tone. "But the cafe——"

He broke off and led her away out of earshot of the gaping, curious sightseers standing by. There he told her all, and she listened in amazement.

"So the Tiger did come!" she said at last. "I—I felt he would. And this—this is his handiwork—I feel sure of it!"

Bob said nothing to that, and for some time they walked around the ruins in silence.

"Never mind, May," said Bob at last, speaking more hopefully and bravely than he really felt, "it's a knock-down blow, but we'll get over it somehow."

He did not say how that was to be done, for he had no idea himself, and May shook her head sadly. The silence was suddenly broken by a familiar, oily voice close by.

"Vell, vell, vell! This is a bit of bad luck for somebody!"

They turned to see Melter Moss standing nearby. He was staring at the ruins, and he turned his gaze on the pair, giving a little start at recognising Bob.

"Vell, Miss Edwards," he went on, "this is a bad business, ain't it? That nice little cafe of yours—all gone up in smoke. Thank goodness the building was insured, anyway!"

"Insured!" gulped May, her heart and Bob's giving a wild bound.

"Why, yes, of course," said Moss, with a leering grin. "I'm a business man, I am, and as the property was mine, I insured it. I hope you did the same with your business, my tear."

May's face fell, and she shook her head sadly.

"No, I didn't," she replied in a low tone. "I—I never thought of that. It means that I—I am ruined!"

(Another powerfully written instalment will appear in next week's COMIC CUTS.)

24-7-37

All the Best Jokes, Folks.

"WHY, hallo, Gus! I didn't see you there!"

"I'm not there, Harold. I'm here! But why the old clothes—are you going for a tramp?"

"No fear! The last one I went for gave me a black eye!"

"Ho, ho! Do you know I sent my shoes to be mended last week and they came back full of holes!"

"Disgusting! What did you do?"

"Oh, nothing! You see, the holes were where they put the nails in! Tell me, chummy, what's the diff 'tween a famous flyer and a man who can't fly at all?"

"Well, I should say the first is notable and the second not able to!"

"My—what brains! I say, you know my brother in the Army?"

"What, the fat one with blue eyes?"

"No, the thin one with a red nose! Well, he wants to know how to march in time."

"Tell him to wear socks with 'clocks' on them! You're looking very pale to-day."

"Yes. I want to a place yesterday and everything swam before my eyes!"

"Dear, dear! Did you see a doctor?"

"What for? I was at the Aquarium! Talking of water, what is the difference between a bottle of pop and a tailor?"

"That's simple! One seems so nice and t'other sews nice seams!"

"C'rect! Did you catch that train I saw you running for this morning?"

"Yes, sir! You know, I'm just like a race-horse!"

"And how?"

"Well, I race for the train, and a race-horse trains for the race!"

"Ha, ha! How's your garden these days?"

"Oh, it's like a rifle range, you know!"

"Full of shoots, I suppose? Did I tell you I had my watch stolen last week?"

"Was it chased?"

"It certainly was! I chased the thief for a mile!"

"No, I mean was it engine-turned?"

"Not half! In fact, it was engine-bent, 'cos I dropped it under a fire-engine after I caught the ticker-snatcher."

"Couldn't you have rescued it?"

"No. You see, I hadn't 'time'!"

"Ouch! You know, I find it a great advantage being colour-blind."

"Stops you feeling 'blue,' eh? But can you tell me a good cure for sleeplessness?"

"Have you tried balancing yourself on the bed-rail on your big toe?"

"Don't be goofy!"

"Well, you try it and you'll soon drop off! Do you find driving your old car very hard on a wet day?"

"No, it's child's play! In fact, it's-kids! But it's very hard driving in the full force of a gale!"

"You mean teeth of a gale, don't you? Haven't you ever heard of a biting wind?"

"Oh, help! Would you call the wind to-day a high wind?"

"Dunno! But it was low enough to blow my tatta off! But, tell me, what insects make landlords happy?"

"Ten-ants, of course!"

"Right! How's your new dog?"

"Oh, fine, but he keeps on straying! I call him Twinkle Little Star!"

"What for?"

"'Cos I don't know where he are! Now I must gallop off. Cheery-bung-ho!"

"So-long, brother mirth-maker!"

Larry O'Dare and his famous car have a thrilling— adventure at sea with a giant tunny-fish.

A Braggart Gets Hooked!

HALF a dozen small open motor-launches were gliding stealthily through the choppy waves off the north coast of Scotland, when Larry O'Dare came winging overhead in his famous Flying Car.

It was rare holiday weather up there, and tireless Larry was filling in his time by flying passengers across from Scotland for trips round the Royal Naval Base at Scapa Flow, in the Orkney Islands.

At the moment, however, Larry was on his way back to the little fishing resort of McBlane, where he had made his headquarters. But, at sight of those motor-cruisers, his eyes gleamed.

"Hallo! Here are the bold tunny-fishers!" he smiled at his passenger. And both peered eagerly down.

For tunny-fishing is not only the most expensive and exciting of sports, but it is also the most dangerous form of fishing!

Vigorous, fierce and beautiful, tunny are fish that measure anything from six to twenty feet long, and weigh accordingly. Some of these monsters, indeed, tip the scales at over eight hundred pounds.

Thus, in order to hunt such giants, the sportsman must equip himself with a powerful launch, and plenty of strong tackle. Also, he must be prepared for a terrific battle that may last hours! It is, in fact, a gruelling test of nerve, skill and muscle.

"By jove, I'd like to watch these fishers in action!" Larry's passenger exclaimed suddenly. Whereupon Larry swooped towards the leading launch just as the fun began!

There were three men in that cruiser—the helmsman, a flashily clad angler who sat in the cockpit beside him, and another young sportsman who crouched in the bows, nervously gripping his long, strong, tunny-rod. Over his shoulders he wore a stout leather harness, with a deep socket attached to the belt.

And, even as Larry's car hovered under its spinning rotor-vanes, there came a tremendous swirl in the water ahead!

"Got him!"

Larry stiffened with excitement.

Cra-a-ash! Out of the sea hurtled a huge and glorious fish, all green, pale blue, and flashing silver. High into the air sped the great creature, and for a full second it seemed to poise there, tugging viciously at the hook between its jaws.

Then, with a resounding crash, it plunged into the boiling foam again, and Larry shouted:

"Gosh! Watch that fisherman! He's in danger!"

It was true! Either the young sportsman lacked skill or speed, but the fact remains that, having hooked his fish, he failed to thrust the butt-end of his rod into the socket at his belt.

And as no man can "play" a six-hundred-pound tunny by strength of arm alone, the result was disaster!

"Look out! There came a yell from the helmsman as the youngster was dragged clean off his feet next instant.

Right out over the bows he flopped, and only a desperate last-second grab saved him from the sea. Had he fallen in, the launch's sharp cut-water might easily have rammed him, and the faces of Larry and his passenger turned very white as they peered helplessly down.

As for the fighting tunny, that giant was already speeding away, taking with him a rod and tackle worth thirty pounds!

"Phew!"

Larry let out a gasp when at last the youngster just scrambled back into safety. But then, as the flying car-ist gazed down again, he knitted his brows.

For the other sportsman, instead of aiding his comrade, was too busy shaking his fists up at the Flying Car, his face red with anger!

"Well, I'm blowed!" exclaimed Larry's passenger indignantly, as he caught a faint volley of abuse. "It certainly wasn't our fault that boy lost his tunny, and the other specimen would have done better to help his pal than rave at us! Who does he think he is, anyway?"

"Oh, just some rich sport, who thinks he owns the sea!" shrugged Larry. "However, the other chap is safe now, so we may as well shift!"

So saying, Larry kissed his finger-tips sweetly down to the abusive tunny-fisher, and dismissed the incident as he flew home to McBlane.

But that evening, on entering the hotel after a stroll, Larry was rudely reminded of the affair once more.

"I say, you're a doggone quitter, Malcolm! Here I give you a chance to strike a real humdinger of a tunny, and what do you do? You lost your nerve, lost my best rod, and made me look a fool into the bargain! I'm Cyrus T. Hanson, I am, the champ tunny-fisher of America, and it's the last time I'll ever take a greenhorn quitter out with me!"

Such was the outburst that Larry heard, delivered in a harsh American twang; and, as he came into the lounge, he saw that the speaker was the flashy angler who had raved at him earlier on. He was a big, bumptious fellow, and he stood glaring at his companion, a quiet-looking youngster whose cheeks were slowly colouring up with anger.

"But I didn't lose my nerve, Hanson!" he protested gruffly. "Hang it, I'm only a novice at tunny-fishing, and when that monster tugged like a whale, I just wasn't quick enough to——"

"Nuts! You got scared!" snarled Hanson—and then caught sight of Larry.

"Ah!" he snapped, his arrogant eyes narrowing. Striding over, the American caught Larry roughly by the arm.

"Yeah, and you're the fool who butted in with that Flying Car, I guess!" rasped Hanson. "Say, you've got a nerve, scaring our fish and——"

But Cyrus T. Hanson, millionaire, sportsman, and bully, got no further.

Grabbing the American swanker, Larry calmly pitched him neck and crop out of the lounge.

"Sorry, but I don't like being bullied by chaps like him!" Larry said coolly to Peter Malcolm—who promptly shook hands.

"Thanks, Mr. O'Dare—neither do I!" cried the youngster. "That gasbag fairly ragged me into going out tunny-fishing today, and then laughed and jeered at my beginner's efforts all the time! Confound him!" Peter added resentfully. "I may not have much skill, but I'd soon show him that my nerve is as good as his if I got the chance!"

"Oh, forget him!" laughed Larry, and that evening, the two young men became fast friends. As a result, Peter Malcolm forgot all about tunny-fishing next day, and spent a grand time in the Flying Car instead!

And, curiously enough, as the new chums sped homewards, they saw history repeat itself.

Again the tunny-fishing launches came into sight, and there, in the leading craft, was Cyrus T. Hanson, accompanied only by his helmsman. Peter winked at Larry, who winked back. With a mischievous grin he forthwith dived the Flying Car.

As he did so, Cyrus T. hooked his fish.

Or, rather, it seemed as if the tunny hooked Cyrus T.

"Wow!" yelled Larry, next moment, as up into the air curved a spectacular giant, lashing its tail and fins wickedly. And a real leviathan it was this time—a full eight hundred pounds of fight and fury.

"Now we'll watch the American champ do his stuff!" Larry grinned—only to gasp in the next breath.

For Cyrus T., flustered by the truly terrific frenzy of the giant he had hooked, proceeded to lose his head like the veriest greenhorn!

Like Peter, he failed to strike swiftly enough, and like Peter, he was instantly yanked off his feet. But, unlike that agile youth, he could not save himself, and the next instant saw the braggart hurled headlong into the sea! Splash! And only the dexterity of his boatman saved him from being rammed by the launch.

But both Peter and Larry cried out in horror at what happened next.

Cyrus T. Hanson, weighed down by heavy sea-boots, was in direst peril!

It seemed either that he had only half-socketed his rod, or else the coiling line had tangled with his harness as the maddened tunny circled and leapt into the air again. But whatever it was, the luckless fisher was being dragged through under the waves, like a log towed by a racing destroyer!

"He'll be drowned!" choked Larry, and dived headlong to the rescue. As the Flying Car flashed seawards, Peter Malcolm tore off his shoes and jacket.

And then, with the Flying Car still thirty feet above the billows, that gallant youngster dived to save the man who had called him a coward.

It was a glorious plunge—a magnificent effort!

For a few heart-stopping seconds, swirling foam hid them both. The next Larry saw, Peter was grappling the American with one hand, while, penknife in the other, he slashed at the thrumming line as both men were dragged helter-skelter through the sea.

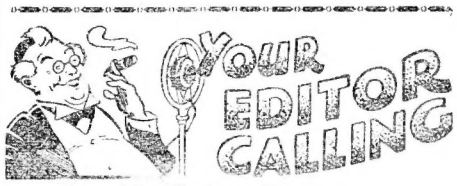
Then it was Larry's turn to crash into the battle. Fighting-mad, the enormous tunny was racing back to attack the helpless pair.

"Thunder!" gsaped Larry, and quick as lightning, he fired the flare-pistol he always carried. The screaming flare-cartridge just missed the huge attacker, but exploded on the water in a burst of crimson fire that scared the tunny out of its fishy wits. One more tumultuous leap it gave, skimming inches past the Flying Car. Then, with a deafening crash, it was off again, towing Cyrus T.'s spare rod in its wake!

"And Peter, old chap, that was the bravest rescue I've ever seen!" Larry called down earnestly, when, five minutes later, the young hero had heaved the half-drowned American into the launch with the boatman's aid. And that evening, Larry also said a few crisp words to Cyrus T. Hanson himself, in the hotel.

Whereupon Cyrus T. Hanson, scared afresh by the glint in Larry's grey eyes, duly spluttered out full apologies—and thanks!

(Another tale of Larry O'Dare in next week's COMIC CUTS.)



From The Fleetway House,
Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

MY DEAR CUTLETS,—On the bus, on my way to the office this morning, I gave the conductor a penny that had a hole in it, though I didn't notice the hole. But he did, and promptly kicked up a dust.

"Well, what about it?" I snorted. "You've just given me a ticket with a hole in it, but I'm not grumbling."

And I hope that none of you are doing any grumbling about this number of the King of Comics.

However, if any of you should have any complaints, don't forget to drop me a line and tell me all about it. I'm always pleased to hear from Cutlets, y'know.

Next week's story of Duke, Dan and Darky, by the way, will be called: "SPEED-BOAT PIRATES!" You'll like this yarn because it's full of laughs as well as thrills.

Yours cheerily,

CLARENCE C. CUTTS.

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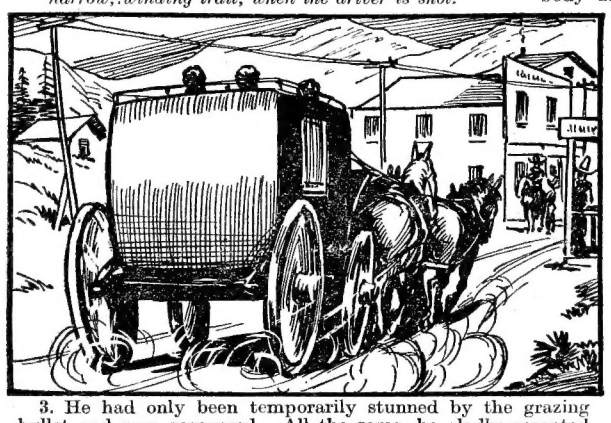
24-7-37

OUTLAW'S GOLD

Ted Harvey and his brother Buck are going in search of hidden gold with Myra Dale, who has a chart showing where the gold is to be found. They elude a rascally Mexican, Don Padrez, who is trying to steal the chart, and are making their getaway in a stage-coach on a narrow, winding trail, when the driver is shot.

1. With jaw grimly set Buck Harvey snatched at the reins which had fallen from the hands of the wounded driver. Ted was attending to him, grasping him in time to prevent his falling from the box seat. Buck realised that the safety of the coach and everybody aboard depended on his keeping it to the narrow rocky trail.

2. In a few moments the horses were under control again, and Buck kept them at full stretch, for up above the Mexicans were still firing at them. Before long, however, the coach rounded a bend in the winding trail, and was no longer visible to the bandits. The driver was put back on the seat between the brothers.



3. He had only been temporarily stunned by the grazing bullet and soon recovered. All the same, he gladly accepted Buck's offer to continue driving, and the coach rumbled on till at last a small town came in sight—the coach's destination.

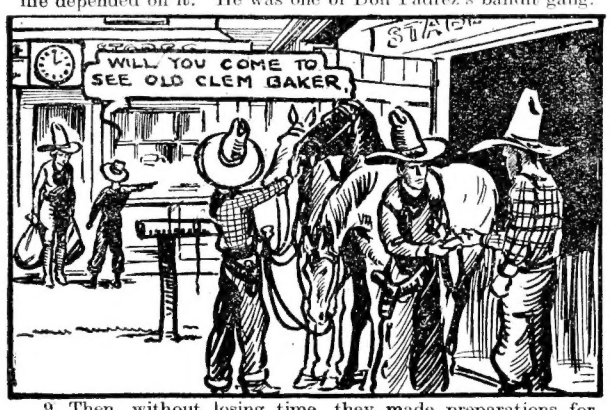
4. Thanking the driver for the lift, and receiving his in return for what they had done, the three gold-seeking chums put up at a small hotel. After a welcome meal, they studied the gold chart, and then decided to take the train to Santa Fey.

5. None of them saw the swarthy Mexican outside the window, who could hear every word they said. After a good night's rest, followed by a hearty breakfast, the three made their way to the station. The watcher saw them board the train.

6. They took no notice of him, even if they saw him. As soon as the train had departed, the Mexican mounted his horse and went speeding out of the town as though his very life depended on it. He was one of Don Padrez's bandit gang.

7. And it was before the bandit chief himself that the rider at last reined in his panting steed, for he knew where to find him. Eagerly and breathlessly, he poured out his story, that Myra and the two brothers had gone by train to Santa Fey.

8. Meanwhile, the train was speeding on its way across the boundless prairie. The three chums talked excitedly of their plans and hopes, congratulating themselves on having got rid of Don Padrez at last—as they thought. Santa Fey was reached.



9. Then, without losing time, they made preparations for the next stage of their journey. While Ted and Buck bought three horses, Myra went to the stores for provisions. As she emerged, a boy asked her to go along and see old Clem Baker.

10. Myra recognised the name at once as that of an old friend of her father's. "Why, certainly I will," she said. "I'll be only too pleased." With that she carried her purchases across to Ted and Buck, and told them of what she intended to do.

11. "Okay by us, Myra," said Ted cheerily. "We'll wait for you here." With a promise not to be long, Myra went off with the boy who offered to show her where Clem Baker lived. Ted and Buck tied the provisions to their saddles and waited.

12. But hours went by, and there was no sign of the girl returning. The brothers began to get anxious, and at last, with a feeling that something was wrong, they mounted their steeds, and taking Myra's as well, they went in search of her.

13. They had seen which way she had gone, and they followed the trail to the outskirts of the town. Still they saw no sign of their girl chum, and their foreboding increased. Suddenly Buck saw a glove on the ground. "That's Myra's!" he cried.

14. He quickly dismounted and picked up the glove. "Yes, it's hers right enough," he said. "This looks fishy, Ted." "It sure does!" agreed his brother. "Look—there's the boy who brought Myra the message, behind that shack—he is watching us!"

(WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO MYRA? DON'T MISS NEXT WEEK'S THRILLING CONTINUATION OF THIS STIRRING WILD WEST PICTURE-STORY, AND DON'T FORGET TO INTRODUCE THE KING OF COMICS TO YOUR CHUMS.)

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